1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

After giving birth, the mother keeps her infant in the shade of her hut for three or four days, receiving visits from admiring neighbors. The infant is protected by various charms and amulets attached to its elbow and wrist. It is fed whenever it cries. When the mother does leave her hut, carrying the infant on her back, she protects it from the sun by covering it with a leaf. When it is bigger she carries it without a supporting sling, either on her hip or on her back. The child is always with her, and she devotes her spare time to playing with it and singing to it. Even when dancing she may carry it in a sling at her side.

The child is taught to walk almost as soon as it is big enough to be allowed on the ground alone. This process is sometimes hastened by scratching its knee and placing a fast-moving beetle (*pakalakala*) in the blood, then allowing it to run away. Soon, the mother believes, her child will be running as fast as the beetle.

Breast feeding is continued for about a year; sometimes a child continues to be breast fed while it is able to run about the camp. But from a few weeks after its birth it is introduced gradually to vegetable foods.

Fathers, although Schebesta writes that they do not like to be bothered with infants, help their wives in the care of children and even attend to their personal needs.

[P. 178-D]

PLATE 28 1/A

PYGMY PHYSICAL TYPES, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

855 851 a. An Mbuti hunter and child. Every child has a father in every hunter, even in such a case as this, in which the child's mother was a member of the band until she married a villager, who fathered the boy. Such children are brought up in the village, as villagers, and never become members of an Mbuti band, however much affection they might receive when the hunters visit the village.

882 885 202 b. A youth, shortly to become a hunter. He will already be assuming the responsibilities of adulthood, though he is unlikely to own a hunting net of his own until he is married. Elbow clapping is a major means of signaling through the forest. By flexing the elbow against the side of the chest the sound box is enlarged or compressed, causing a variation in pitch, which, when combined with rhythmic variations, allows for the sending of reasonably complex messages. The result of a hunt can be quickly relayed back to the camp in this way.

1/A /Plate 28 appears on page 289--Analyst/

[P.288]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 Mbuti

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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142
302
855
851

/Plate 28-A/

/Caption appears on p. 288/

[P.289-A]

855 There is a great deal of swapping children, fostering, and adoption. This takes place especially between sisters and between women who are friendly and work together. When a woman dies, her sister will normally take over her children, keeping the girls until they are ready for marriage. The boys join their father when they are old enough to hunt.

881 Among the pygmies living in my immediate neighborhood, there is no separate pygmy initiation ceremony. Girls are not publicly initiated at all, and as mentioned above, the boys go through the Negro bush school with the sons of their patrons. (See Negro-pygmy relations; p. 325.)

585 A marriage within the camp creates no disturbance in the relations of the group as a whole, and little between the individuals in particular, but an intercamp marriage does produce crises in the lives of those close to the principals, as well as of the principals themselves, for such a marriage requires ceremony.

585 628 Schebesta[9] describes one of the latter, in which the two groups of kin, complete with brides but not with grooms, met in the forest away from either camp. They set up their huts near each other, but in separate bivouacs, and feasted and danced *separately* for three days. Then the two groups came together and the elder men of each group brought the two brides face to face and gave them advice—to keep the camp full of food, to be polite and friendly, to be particularly thoughtful of old people and children, to live in peace and bear many offspring. After this excellent advice, each girl was led by the kinfolk of her new husband to the camp in which she was to live, and there she joined her new husband. She brought along with her a few girls of her own group to ease the strain of so

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 134–135.

[P 340-A]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical memories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse. (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relationships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

AGE GROUPS

Table 6 shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

A [see page 228 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is being done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted. Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

work. Then she took the leaves we had collected and slit the stalks toward the end, like clothespins, hooking two or three of them together. When she had enough she started hanging them on the framework like tiles, overlapping each other and forming a waterproof covering. There were leaves left over when she had finished, so she let other women take them for their houses.

Everyone was working at something, and all were chattering and making fun of the late-comers who had not yet finished leafing their huts, saying how wet they were going to get when the rain came. But I noticed that those who had already finished, like Masamba, even went back to the forest to cut more wood and leaves to help the lazy stragglers who had spent too much time gathering food and eating it on the way in. Sometimes there were as many as four women working on one hut, some hanging leaves from the outside, working upward, others preferring to work from the inside, pushing the leaves through the lattice and working from the top down. Once in a while there was a loud wail as some playful child got in the way and was soundly slapped by his mother.

Just before dusk there was a sudden darkening and a wind swept through the tree tops making leaves and small branches fall to the ground, spinning and fluttering lightly. Then with a sudden hissing sound, loud and ominous, the sky seemed to open and the rain came pouring down. In the villages, the rain comes down so hard that it can almost hurt you, stinging the skin and blowing into the eyes and nose and mouth, but in the forest its fall is broken by the trees and by the time it reaches the ground it has spent its energy.

There were angry shouts from the men as the lightning flashed and the thunder rumbled on and on, and they peered anxiously from the tiny entrances to their huts to see when it was going to end. If it went on too long it would spoil the hunting for tomorrow. My hut was filled with the bachelors, all of whom Kenge had grandly invited in. He explained that they were too old to sleep with their parents